

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 16216

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, JA, KN, KS, UNGA
SUBJECT: KOREA QUESTION IN UN

REF: TOKYO 16160

SUMMARY: FONOFF PROFESSIONALS BELIEVE AMBASSADOR
SAITO HAS BEEN TOO "FORWARD" IN WAY HE HAD PRESENTED
LATEST JAPANESE SUGGESTION FOR APPROACHING KOREA
QUESTION IN UN. THIS JUDGMENT APPEARS TO REFLECT SPLIT
BETWEEN FONOFF AND JUN, AND PROBABLY BETWEEN FONMIN
MIYAZAWA AND HIS BUREAUCRACY ON POSTURE JAPAN SHOULD ADOPT
ON ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

1. FONOFF NORTHEAST ASIA DIVDIR ENDO CALLED EMBOFF IN
NOV 12 TO PROVIDE "CONFIDENTIAL" AND "INFORMAL" CLARIFICATION
IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK. HE NOTED THAT APPROACH
MADE BY AMBASSADOR SAITO IN NEW YORK MORE "FORWARD" THAN
TENTATIVE EXPLORATORY DEMARCHE MADE IN WASHINGTON
BY AMBASSADOR YASUKAWA TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB.
OF THE TWO DEMARCHES, YASUKAWA'S WAS MORE FAITHFUL TO
THE CONSENSUS IN FONOFF, ENDO SAID. FONOFF BELIEVES
THAT WALDHEIM SUGGESTION INVOLVING SEPARATE MEETINGS
IS WORTH CONSIDERING, BUT IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL
SOLUTIONS ON WHICH US VIEWS MIGHT BE SOLICITED. NEUTRAL
ON THE MERITS OF THE SUGGESTION, FONOFF IS RELUCTANT
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TO REGARD IT AS FORMAL PROPOSAL.

2. AS TO SUBSTANCE OF SUGGESTION, AND ENDO PARTICULARLY EMPHATIC ON THIS POINT, FONOFF WOULD FIND IDEA ACCEPTABLE ONLY IF THE TWO MEETINGS CLOSELY AND EXPLICITLY LINKED. NO AGREEMENT TO HOLD US-DPRK TALKS CONCERNING ARMISTICE COULD BE REACHED UNLESS FIRM COMMITMENT RECEIVED ON CONVENING BROADER CONFERENCE INCLUDING ROK TO DISCUSS FUTURE OF PENINSULA. TIMING OF SECOND MEETING WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY SOON AFTER, OR PERHAPS EVEN SIMULTANEOUS WITH, CONVENING OF FIRST.

3. ENDO'S ASSESSMENT IS THAT US WILL REJECT IDEA AS ONE WHICH CONCEDES TOO MUCH TO DPRK AND IS UNACCEPTABLE TO ROK. FURTHERMORE, THERE LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT DPRK WOULD ACCEPT CLOSE LINKAGE BETWEEN MEETINGS, PARTICULARLY SIMULTANEOUS APPROACH. FONOFF "SHARKS THESE VIEWS" ON SHORTCOMINGS OF SUGGESTION, ENDO CONCLUDED.

4. COMMENT: ENDO APPROACH APPEARS CAREFULLY CONSIDERED EFFORT TO TEMPER COMMITMENT FONOFF BELIEVES JUN HAS MADE TO NOV 7 SUGGESTION. HE STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT SAITO HAD EXCEED AT LEAST THE SPIRIT OF HIS INSTRUCTIONS BY PUSHING THE SUGGESTION AS A FORMAL PROPOSAL, INCLUDING "NOTE VERBALE" AND DRAFT RESOLUTION. HE INTIMATED THAT "NOTE VERBALE" IN ITSELF CAME AS SURPRISE TO HIM AND HIS COLLEAGUES.

5. WHILE WE CAN BE REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT ENDO'S VIEWS REPRESENT THE CONSENSUS OF PROFESSIONALS IN THE FONOFF, THERE NO GUARANTEE THAT SAITO'S LESS EQUIVOCAL HANDLING OF QUESTION IS NOT PRECISELY WHAT FONMIN MIYAZAWA WANTS. ON CONTRARY WE KNOW THAT HE PERSONALLY DEEPLY INTERESTED IN IDEA. BOTH HE AND PRIME MINISTER MIKI STAND TO GAIN DOMESTIC POLITICAL BROWNIE POINTS SHOULD THEY BE ABLE TO ENGINEER CONTACTS BETWEEN US AND DPRK.

6. ASSUMING THAT AMBASSADOR SAITO HAS DIRECT CONTACT WITH MIYAZAWA'S OFFICE, DIFFERENCE IN APPROACH ALSO APPEARS TO REFLECT GAP BETWEEN FONMIN AND HIS
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BUREAUCRACY, A GAP THAT HAS EXISTED BEFORE ON VARIETY OF ISSUES.
HODGSON

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